

School Facilities/Construction Technical Assistance, Information & Resources

As a service to its users, the Vermont Department of Education offers links from its Web site to resources and Web sites developed by other organizations. These links are provided as a resource only. Unless specifically stated, the inclusion of such links does not imply endorsement or support of information, products or services offered by an organization other than the Vermont Department of Education. Information contained on such linked resources should be independently verified.

For more information or to provide feedback about these resources, contact Cathy Hilgendorf, School Construction Coordinator, at (802) 828-5402 or cathy.hilgendorf@state.vt.us.

NOTE: All the links included in this document will take you off the department's Web site.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA): Vermont Department of Health (Fall 2009)

In 1986, the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) was signed into law by the federal government, requiring public and private non-profit kindergarten through 12th grade schools to inspect their buildings for asbestos-containing building materials. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) only requires removal of asbestos to prevent significant public exposure during demolition or renovation. EPA does, however, require an in-place, pro-active asbestos management program for all [local education agencies \(LEA\)](#) in order to ensure [asbestos-containing building materials \(ACBM\)](#) remain in good condition and are undisturbed by students, faculty, and staff.

Over the past decade, the New England states have conducted audits of school asbestos management plans in order to determine regulatory compliance. Several key requirements have been identified during the course of these inspections as critical to ensuring that the school asbestos management plan remains properly updated. The most common items cited for noncompliance are: three year re-inspections by a licensed inspector; yearly notification to parents, teachers, and employees regarding the availability of the asbestos management plan; six month periodic surveillance of all known or suspected asbestos-containing building materials; and two hour asbestos awareness training for maintenance and custodial staff within sixty days of hire.

In regards to new construction, an LEA can submit a signed statement from either the architect, project engineer, or an accredited inspector "that no ACBM was specified as a building material in any construction document for the building, or to the best of his or her knowledge, no ACBM was used as a building material in the building" in substitute for an inspection. However, this does not relinquish the requirement for the LEA to submit a management plan. All LEAs must submit management plans for all of their schools to the Vermont Department of Health for approval. For more information visit <http://www.epa.gov/region02/ahera/>. Contact: Hugh Pilgram with EPA at (617)918-1843 or Pilgrim.Hugh@epamail.epa.gov.

Clean Energy Development Fund Energy Funding Opportunities for Towns

- **Grant Program**

The grant program provides financial assistance for pre-project assessments, large-scale systems, small-scale systems, community-scale systems, and special demonstration projects over 15 kW in size (or 1 million Btu/hour for thermal projects or 15 tons of capacity for geothermal projects). Maximum grant award is \$500,000, and all projects require at least a 50% match (some categories allow some of that to be in-kind match). Up to \$2.5 million available per grant round, some of which will be federal stimulus (ARRA) dollars and will come with restrictions. Two grant rounds per year; next RFP will be issued in January 2010. See http://www.publicservice.vermont.gov/energy/ee_cleanenergyfund.html for more information.

- **Municipal Technical Assistance Grant Program**

This grant program assists municipalities by providing up to \$5,000 per grant for renewable energy assessment studies. Up to \$50,000 is available for this program in FY 10. Funding is available for up to 90% of a project's cost (10% cash match is required from the grantee). Applications are due the first Thursday of every month. See http://www.publicservice.vermont.gov/energy/ee_cleanenergyfund.html for more information.

- **Loan Program**

The loan program provides financial assistance for large-scale systems over 15 kW in size (or 1 million Btu/hour for thermal projects or 15 tons of capacity for geothermal projects). Maximum loan award is \$500,000; interest rate is currently 2%. Applications are due quarterly. Review period approximately two months. See http://www.publicservice.vermont.gov/energy/ee_cleanenergyfund.html for more information.

- **Small-Scale Renewable Energy Incentive Program**

This program provides incentives for solar photovoltaic, solar hot water, wind, and micro-hydro systems under 15 kW in size. Non-competitive. Information and applications are available at <http://www.rerc-vt.org>.

- **Public-Serving Institutions Program**

As part of the ARRA stimulus funding, this program is currently being designed and will act as a revolving loan and/or small grant program for public-serving nonprofit or government institutions to implement non-electric energy efficiency measures, or renewable energy projects. More information: <http://www.publicservice.vermont.gov>.

- **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) Program**

CEDF will allocate the required 60% of Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) ARRA federal stimulus allocated funds to units of local government that are not eligible to receive direct grants from the Department of Energy (USDOE). The DPS, in its application to USDOE (still under review by USDOE), has interpreted "units of local government" to be defined as stated in Vermont Statute (1 V.S.A. § 126), which defines a Municipality as "a city, town, town school district, incorporated school or fire district or incorporated village and all other governmental incorporated units." Upon USDOE approval of Vermont's application, including its interpretation of a municipality, a solicitation will

be issued to towns (timeframe now calls for an October issuance). Funds shall be used to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy installations. All subgrants to the units of local government will be made no later than 180 days after DOE application approval. More information will be available at <http://www.publicservice.vermont.gov> and through the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. In the meantime, towns should be preparing by assessing their weatherization, efficiency, and renewables needs and should be obtaining energy audits and cost estimates for work if possible. Information on obtaining audits can be found at <http://www.eecbg.vermont.org>. More information on the EECBG program in general (including preparatory steps to meet funding requirements, such as registering with CCR and obtaining a DUNS number), may be found at www.eecbg.energy.gov.

- **Regional Planning Commissions**

Because Vermont does not have County level government and therefore did not receive direct county level funding, we will be allocating \$880,000 of EECBG funding to the ten Regional Planning Commissions in the state to use for county level energy efficiency related projects. Contact your local RPC for more information, or visit <http://www.publicservice.vermont.gov>.

Questions? Please visit <http://www.publicservice.vermont.gov> (or <http://www.recovery.vermont.gov>) first. Note that no solicitations will be issued until at least October, and you will be notified by VLCT. If there is an urgent matter and you cannot answer your question elsewhere, you may contact: Anne Margolis at Anne.margolis@state.vt.us or (802) 828-4017

Envision School Environmental Health Program

<http://www.healthvermont.gov/enviro/envision.aspx>

The Envision School Environmental Health Program results from Act 125, in which the legislature charged the Department of Education, Department of Buildings & General Services and Department of Health to develop an environmental health program to improve schools' environments. This site provides information about materials and practices commonly used in school operation and construction that may compromise indoor air quality or negatively impact human health as well as providing schools with resources, workshop referrals and technical assistance.

Guide to Financing Energy Smart Schools (PDF)

http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/buildings/publications/pdfs/energysmartschools/ess_financeguide_0708.pdf

This U.S. Department on Energy publication provides schools with information on High Performance Schools. This guide addresses common barriers associated with new construction, major renovations, and retrofit projects in high-performance schools. It summarizes existing methods of financing and looks ahead to innovative, replicable approaches. This guide supports making a business case for high-performance design backed by economic analysis that looks at the costs and benefits of new construction and retrofits over the project's lifetime.

Loan and Grant Opportunities for Public School Renovations

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/cf/brief_cp_direct.htm

The US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Section, has several grant and loan programs available for to maintain and foster community facilities in rural areas.

School Fundraiser with Energy Lesson

For schools served by Green Mountain Power (GMP): A school fundraiser with a built in energy efficiency lesson!

http://efficiencyvermont.com/pages/Residential/GMP_EEF/GMP_fundraising/.

Green Mountain Power and Efficiency Vermont are excited to announce their new compact fluorescent light (CFL) fundraising partnership with local area school districts for the 2009-2010 academic year. Schools located in Green Mountain Power's service territory will be given the opportunity to raise money, save energy and raise community awareness about the benefits of energy efficiency through the sale of energy efficient CFL bulbs, with their schools keeping a portion of the proceeds. This flexible fundraising program is open to all students in grades five and above and can be undertaken by an entire grade, a single class or a school group or club. A ninety minute educational course entitled "Energy and the Environment" is included in the program and can be tailored to any grade level. Green Mountain Power and Efficiency Vermont will provide participating schools with all necessary marketing materials and forms. Schools can perform the CFL Fundraiser at the time that best suits their schedule. Use the link above for a program brochure or e-mail schoolfundraiser@veic.